

Message Text

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ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 AID-05
CU-04 /064 W

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R 140822Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY JAKARTA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7442
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR
AMEMBASSY MANILA
AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE
AMEMBASSY TOKYO
AMCONSUL MEDAN
AMCONSUL SURABAYA
USIA WASHDC
CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L JAKARTA 3331

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: PINT, PINS, ID, SOPN
SUBJECT: JAKARTA'S HIGH SCHOOLS CLOSED

REF: JAKARTA 3268 (DTG 130848Z MAR 78)

1. SUMMARY. THE GOVERNMENT HAS CLOSED JAKARTA'S HIGH SCHOOLS UNTIL THE END OF THE MPR SESSION, TO MINIMIZE THE CHANCE OF FURTHER DISTURBANCES IN THE CITY. GOVERNMENT SPOKESMEN HAVE CHARGED THAT OUTSIDE, CRIMINAL ELEMENTS ARE ATTEMPTING TO EXPLOIT THE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT'S DEMONSTRATIONS AND HAVE THREATENED TO USE FORCE AGAINST ANYONE INCITING TO RIOT OR ENGAGED IN ROBBERY OR RACIALISM. END SUMMARY.

2. THE GOVERNMENT OF JAKARTA HAS CLOSED THE CAPITAL
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CITY'S HIGH SCHOOLS UNTIL MARCH 25, WHEN THE MPR SESSION WILL HAVE ENDED. THE CLOSURE WAS ORDERED TO REDUCE THE POSSIBILITY OF FURTHER DISTURBANCES SPEARHEADED BY HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS SUCH AS OCCURRED IN JAKARTA LAST WEEKEND (REFTEL). ABOUT 200,000 JAKARTA STUDENTS ARE AFFECTED BY THE SHUTDOWN. THERE HAVE BEEN NO REPORTED SIGNIFICANT DEMONSTRATIONS IN THE CITY DURING THE PAST 48 HOURS,

BUT SECURITY FORCES, CLAIMING MORE DEMONSTRATIONS ARE PLANNED, REMAIN ON FULL ALERT.

3. JAKARTA (KODAM V) MILITARY COMMANDER MAJ. GEN. NORMAN SASONO HAS PUBLICLY CHARGED THAT NON-STUDENT OUTSIDE ELEMENTS, MORE INTERESTED IN ROBBERY AND "RACIALISM" THAN POLITICS, ARE ATTEMPTING TO EXPLOIT THE RECENT HIGH SCHOOL-BASED DEMONSTRATIONS FOR CRIMINAL PURPOSES. (CSIS STAFFER LIM BIAN KIE HAS PRIVATELY TAKEN THE SAME LINE WITH US.) NORMAN SAID THAT ORDERLY PROTESTS CONDUCTED BY STUDENTS WOULD BE DEALT WITH FIRMLY BUT MODERATELY, BUT HE PROMISED SWIFT, STRONG REPRESSION OF THOSE ENGAGED IN "TERROR AND ROBBERY." HE NOTED THAT ATTACKS ON SHOPS AND PROPERTY, IF LEFT UNCHECKED, COULD LEAD TO DEATH AND "LARGE LOSSES" FOR THE PUBLIC. ASKED BY NEWSMEN WHETHER TROOPS CONFRONTING ROBBERY OR INCITING TO RIOT WERE AUTHORIZED TO SHOOT THE PERPETRATORS, NORMAN ANSWERED, "YES, AND I THINK THE PUBLIC WOULD AGREE WITH THAT POLICY."

4. ONE OF NORMAN'S AIDES CLAIMED THAT ONLY ONE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT APPREHENDED IN RECENT DAYS IN JAKARTA IS STILL IN DETENTION, ON A CHARGE OF POSTING ILLEGAL BANNERS. HE ALSO REVEALED THAT SECURITY FORCES, IN CONDUCTING CHECKS OF VEHICLES ENTERING JAKARTA IN THE PAST WEEKS TO PREVENT THE INFILTRATION OF POLITICAL CONFIDENTIAL

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DEMONSTRATORS INTO THE CITY, HAD DETAINED 201 PEOPLE, ALL BUT ONE (A STUDENT OF THE BANDUNG TECHNICAL INSTITUTE, ITB) OF WHOM HAVE BEEN RELEASED. NORMAN HIMSELF DENIED THAT ANY STUDENTS HAVE BEEN KILLED IN JAKARTA IN CONNECTION WITH STUDENT DEMONSTRATIONS, BUT CONCEDED THAT THERE HAVE BEEN SEVERAL INJURIES REQUIRING HOSPITALIZATION.

5. COMMENT. NORMAN'S USE OF THE TERM "RACIALISM" IS A CODEWORD FOR ATTACKS ON JAKARTA'S ETHNIC CHINESE POPULATION, A READY TARGET FOR ANY POLITICAL/SOCIAL UNREST. THERE HAS BEEN SOME DAMAGE TO SHOPS AND AUTOMOBILES IN THE CITY'S CHINESE QUARTER DURING THE HIGH SCHOOL DEMONSTRATIONS WHICH RECENTLY OCCURRED THERE, BUT SO FAR THE CHINESE HAVE BEEN SPARED ANY CONCERTED ATTACKS.
MASTERS

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